



St. Paul's Journal

Advent 2018



Dear friends,

This issue of St. Paul's Journal, has once again been put together by our Managing Editor Gail Fulop (a.k.a. our capable Office Manager). It gathers up the insights and commitments of those in leadership in the lay ministries of our parish, in particular: our Outreach Counsellor, Women's Group Co-ordinator, *SafeR Church* Committee, and Chancel Guild Co-director. I thank all the writers warmly for both the work they do and the time they took to write about their efforts. I would urge you to read their articles as a way of getting to know your fellow parishioners, and also as a way of appreciating what they contribute to our life of our church.

There is always a risk in singling out particular parish ministries—namely a risk that the dozens of others would be

overlooked. One only has to look at our weekly leaflet margins to get a sense of how many folks contribute to the healthy life of our ‘household of faith’. But even that observation risks overlooking so many behind-the-scenes acts of skill, foresight, and charity that make us a spiritual family. It is no wonder that St. Paul the Apostle, our namesake, struggled to find the right name for the marvellously diverse communities of faith that gathered from every ‘nation and tribe and people and tongue’ (*Revelation* 7.9) to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the hope of the world—family, body, building... confessing no preference of gender, or race, or wealth and power (*Galatians* 3.28). I remain, I believe more than ever, grateful for my part in this wonderful community of faith.

Paul Friesen

Parish Life & Mission at St. Paul's

Euphoria. Do You Hear It?

Having entered the drive through I made my order. The coffee was strong and yet satisfying, as was the warmed-up oat bar. I had made a simple choice. It took no thinking. In our busy lives we face personal choices on a daily basis—some automatic, intentional, reflexive, unconscious, instinctual, random, habitual, or easy. For example, buying that coffee, extending a smile, giving a handshake, paying bills, daily chores and routines, various disciplines, work responsibilities. Others are more nuanced and perhaps very difficult, depending upon our mood, coupled with a lack of will. For example; exercise, pushing away from the table, responding kindly to a comment instead of rudely with a reaction, overcoming a habit, exercising coping strategies. Then there is the execution of the acts of the Spirit; love, Joy, Peace, Patience, Kindness, Goodness, Gentleness, Faithfulness, Self-Control. These nine biblical acts can be hard at times.

Robert Schuller, an American Pastor once coined a phrase, “If it’s gonna be, it’s up to me.” There is great power in personal choice. There are many things that we can do. But it involves the first step. Active will verses passive inertia can create an emotional stalemate. However, when one fully understands the outcome of personal choice it can be a powerful liberating reality. It could be argued that difficult choices are difficult because they are difficult. This is a reframing reminiscent of David Hume’s

basic argument against miracles; “miracles don’t happen because miracles don’t happen.” But what about “difficult choices are difficult, because they are difficult”? They are not impossible or necessarily improbable. They are just tough. But in the execution of a positive difficult choice, an emotional liberation of sorts is the outcome. You did the right, difficult, almost impossible thing, and as a result you feel a freeing sort of exhilaration. It’s euphoric! That right thing may have been worked out in a process but nevertheless you did it! And you pushed against a load of inertia, and human will. A Ph.D. dissertation does not appear in the National Library of Canada, suddenly.

Choices that are very difficult often are preceded by a strategy—this is the nuance. I want to overcome a desperate seemingly impossible addiction, and I don’t think I can do it. Or I want to exercise, initiate specific coping mechanisms to distract myself from an emotional trauma, stop biting my nails, lose weight, and overcome something emotionally difficult. I love the story of the little engine that could. A little engine was given a task. Shunt a loaded train to the top of a mountain. The thought was at first daunting, and seemingly impossible. But once connected to the train, the little engine began his/her task. Soon he/she began to recite aloud a mantra, “I think I can, I think I can, I think I can.” And she/he did. How do you spell euphoria? Can you hear it?

The strategy, one step at a time, or better still one roll of his/her little truck's wheels, on revolution at a time; the goal, getting to the top of a mountain. No runner sets out on a goal with the "I can't do this" attitude. No mountain climber even for a second allows for a doubt that they will reach the ascent. The goal is one step at a time. But the goal is divided into short small stages.

Many years ago I climbed Mt. Kenya (18,000 ft.) with a group of others. The people who did not succeed in the end did not have the will to do so in the beginning. Instead, written into their narrative was, "I'll try...I hope so." You know where that led. When anyone is climbing a mountain she or he has to be ferociously willful. "I will do this." Then at the peak, euphoria. Can you hear it?

All this to say this: a difficult choice begins with a determined strategy fueled by will. A strategy that is broken down into small pieces is doable. When you just look at the end goal you might walk away. But when your goal is one step at a time, the possibility becomes plausibility. Once a difficult goal is achieved the next one is better understood for what it is. A marker has been set. "I can do this because I did this before." A client comes in to see a therapist with a problem; imagine the courage, and yet the despair. A strategy is worked out. An outcome reached. Euphoria. Can you hear it?

The spiritual shape of a set goal, a choice, is the best predictor of the intended outcome. A choice conceived, is received and becomes a reality in its full when God is the driving force. The choice that aligns with God's purposes for us has real traction. But knowing how to spiritually battle emotional inertia is key.

Paul seems to have a solution in *Ephesians* 3:20-21; "Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen."

Let's break this down. 1) Someone, not just anyone, stands behind us who has real ability. 2) More ability than we can imagine. 3) One whose power is working within us.

Emotional inertia suddenly starts to dissolve into real movement, pushing against will. Goals are set. Choice is made. A process is established. So to add to Schuller's phrase. "If it's gonna be, it's up to me to accept and harness God's power & his ability, as a source for a desired outcome."

Euphoria. Do you hear it?

*Bryan Hagerman,
St Paul's Church Outreach Counsellor*

2018 LIFT Retreat (*Ladies In Fellowship Together*)

Every two years in late September, women from all over the Maritimes “retreat” from their full schedules to spend a guided weekend at Bayside Camp in Sambro. From Friday night to Sunday noon, this interdenominational group of ladies spends time in teaching, worship, prayer and fellowship. This year, Hannah Montgomery, an assistant pastor at Central Church in Edinburgh, Scotland, delivered a number of talks on the themes of discipleship and hearing God’s voice. And Nicole Mitchell, from Stewiacke, led the worship, as upwards of 140 women joined in song.

This September, nine women from St Paul’s had the privilege of attending the weekend: four braved the bunkbeds and camp dining hall while five drove out for the daytime sessions on Saturday. All nine went away feeling enriched and encouraged.

Over the course of the weekend, Mrs. Montgomery, a gifted teacher, encouraged us with the stories of three different Marys in the Gospels. Like the virgin Mary, we are blessed because God’s full goodness is with us and God will use us if we are willing and if we believe that God will fulfill His promises. As with Mary Magdalen, whom Jesus meets after his resurrection and sends to tell the disciples, Jesus wants to have a personal encounter with us and send us to do his will. And finally, as the Mary of *John 12* anoints Jesus feet with her expensive perfume, so we can pour ourselves out in love for Jesus.

Perhaps the most stirring session of the weekend was on Saturday noon when Hannah talked frankly with us about hearing God’s voice—about the normalcy of communicating with God and His desire to guide us in our daily lives. “God loves to speak to us,” she emphasized, “and we are designed for intimacy with God.” Hannah presented us with one model for hearing God’s voice: 1) Quiet yourself down. 2) Fix your eyes on Jesus 3) Tune to the Holy Spirit and 4) Write it down. While we do not always hear from God, there are myriad ways we might. She suggested some: Scripture, fellow Christians, gut feelings, internal thoughts, images, dreams, and nature. And she cautioned us to test our perceived messages from God: Does it align with Scripture? Does it point me to Christ? Does it bring peace? Does it edify, encourage, and comfort?

In addition to these sessions, attendees had the opportunity to canoe on the lake, join an exercise time called “Praise Moves”, hike in the woods, and participate in healing prayer. There was plenty of lighthearted fun in the way of a dance party and a talent show. And women formed new friendships or made connections over mealtimes.

On Sunday morning, after the final session, women were invited to share at an open mic how Jesus had been working in their lives during the retreat. Stories flowed of God’s grace and faithful work in the various lives of women in the Maritimes - in their families, their own lives, and in the lives of

their friends and churches. And while it's possible at times to despair at the apparent lack of God in our Atlantic communities, that hour alone was evidence to convince us that God is indeed at work, extending grace and transforming lives.

*Adriel Driver
St. Paul's Church Women's Group Co-ordinator*



SafeR Church 2013 to 2018 - What Has Happened at St. Paul's?

In May 2013 Bishop Ron notified parishes they were required to create Parish Prevention and Response Plans, especially in the area of abuse. These plans are part of our *SafeR Church* parish committee work. He encouraged parishes to seize the opportunity to explore in detail the ministry that is happening in the parish, to consider how we train and support all those who are engaged in ministry of any kind, and to determine the ways in which we can make our parishes healthier for everyone.

As stated in the guide provided by the Diocese, the purpose of this work is to create, restore, build, nourish, and sustain communities of trust and trustworthy communities in our parishes and diocese—to create SafeR Church for everyone, by taking active measures to prevent and respond to the threat of:

- all forms of abuse—sexual, physical, spiritual, psychological, emotional, etc.—including bullying and harassment;
- committed by anyone involved in our parishes and diocese—children, youth, adults, seniors, men, women, laypeople, and clergy
- committed against anyone involved in our parishes and diocese—children, youth, adults, seniors, men, women, laypeople, and clergy.

Specific requirements were established by:
EcclesiasticInsurancevictoriaLhawkins@hotmail.com.

Following the *SafeR Church* How-To Guide, the process started at St. Paul's in 2013, first led by Bonnie Skerritt. Acknowledging that

the plan was a means to an end, not an end in itself, in 2014 a *SafeR Church* Committee was formed and has been chaired by Isobel MacPherson. Under its leadership and in collaboration with volunteers from the following ministries, governance audits and action plans have been completed: Children and Youth ministries, Fish Coffee House ministry, Rector's Outreach Lunch ministry and Chancel Guild.

Recently, audits were expanded to include the following ministries and action plans are under construction for: The Parish Lunch, Women's Faith and Fellowship, Create Space Art Outreach, and Outreach Volunteer Counselling.

After detailed review and discussion regarding challenges and opportunities across the work of each ministry, a number of actions which can have immediate benefits were implemented promptly.

Notable examples include the following:

1. A workshop training session for food handling, based on the NS Provincial Guide for Safe Food Handling was arranged for parishioners.
2. Hand washing posters are displayed in the kitchen and wash rooms in the Church and the Parish House.
3. Chancel Guild members wear gloves when handling vessels and communion bread. A hand sanitizer is applied when assisting during communion.
4. A fast washing high temperature dishwasher has been installed as backup for the Rector's Lunch, Parish Lunches, and other catered events.

5. Procedures have been put in place for the Summer Guides regarding safety issues which may occur while on duty.
 6. CPR and First Aid Training is provided to our Summer Guides and office staff.
 7. An AED (automated external defibrillator) was installed near the First Aid Kit on the wall outside the office. It is registered with the province
 8. All employees and volunteers in contact with children and vulnerable adults are required to have a Police Records Check and Vulnerable Records Check.
 9. An in-service on Abuse Prevention, Detection and Response was offered to staff and volunteers working with children, youth and vulnerable adults.
 10. Guidelines based on Diocesan standards were prepared to describe minimum numbers of leaders required where events include children, youth or vulnerable adults.
 11. Repairs to promote Fire Safety were completed at Parish House. Yearly fire drills are scheduled.
 12. A sanitation process is in place for all toys and areas used by the children.
 13. An Incident Investigation Procedure Form and Incident Reporting Form are being developed.
- The purpose of *SafeR Church* is:
- to create, restore, build, nourish, and sustain communities of trust in our parishes and diocese.
 - to create a safer Church for everyone, by taking active measures to prevent and respond to the threat of all forms of abuse—sexual, physical, spiritual, psychological, emotional, etc.

- to include bullying and harassment, committed by anyone involved in our parishes and diocese—children, youth, adults, seniors, men, women, laypeople, and clergy against anyone involved in our parishes and diocese—children, youth, adults, seniors, men, women, laypeople, and clergy.

The work of creating SafeR Church for all is ongoing in every parish throughout the diocese. Being part of the St Paul's *SafeR Church* committee is an opportunity for

intense learning, fellowship and service to our church family. *If you have a heart for this kind of work please contact the Wardens for more information.

***New committee members are needed to keep up the pace of this work at St. Paul's.**

*Submitted by
Isobel McPherson; Maureen White;
Julia Atkins; & Margaret Bateman Ellison.
Some members of the St. Paul's SafeR Church Committee*



Beyond the Chancel Steps: Symbols of Advent

Advent is a time of *expectation* and *hope* in the Church year. Over many years, Christians have embraced symbols that prompt us to remember why Jesus came at Christmas. The liturgical colour purple in Anglican, Lutheran, and Roman Catholic worship in North America signifies the season of Advent, a season of preparation for the coming of Christ, both the 'first' and 'second' coming. Throughout history purple has been the colour of royalty and so the colour is used in Advent to welcome the coming of Christ the King, the one come to 'set things right' to execute justice wherever it is lacking in individuals and social settings and between communities.

Purple is present in Advent at St. Paul's in the vestments worn, the paraments, as well as candles in the Advent wreath. This year our new purple paraments, which were consecrated last Spring in memory of Chancel Guild members, will be used for the first time. Lectern, pulpit, and prayer desk hangings will be new as will the markers for the Bible, the communion table Prayerbook, chalice veil, burse, and priest's stole. In addition, communion table frontlets were included in the new set of purple paraments. They will be placed each week on the communion table being used so are alternated depending on whether it is a *Book of Common Prayer* or *Book of Alternative Services* Eucharist.

Unlike some other churches, St. Paul's has not used a full frontal and super frontal on the stationary table and now the new frontlets provide liturgical colour for both our communion tables but do not hide the meaningful words carved on each table.

Each Sunday in Advent the children at St. Paul's light candles in the Advent wreath. Many of us also have wreaths to light at home. Did you know the custom originated in Germany in 1839 when a Lutheran minister working at a children's mission created a wreath out of a wagon wheel? It had 20 red candles and four white ones so one could be lit each day from December 1st until December 24th.

The custom has evolved and today at St. Paul's, as in many other churches and homes, an evergreen wreath with five candles is a very visible Advent symbol. The *circle of the wreath* symbolizes God's unending love leading to eternal life. The *real greening* is a symbol of life in the midst of winter and death. While the *candles* each have a specific meaning. Hence throughout Advent each candle provides something specific to reflect upon: Here is one popular explanation among others.

1. **HOPE** - The purple *Prophet's* Candle relates to Isaiah waiting hopefully for the Messiah.

2. **FAITH** - The purple **Bethlehem** Candle symbolizes Micah foretelling the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem.

3. **JOY** - The pink **Shepherd's** Candle because the angels told the shepherds, with great joy, that Jesus had come for humble, unimportant folks like them.

4. **PEACE** - The third purple candle known as the **Angel's** Candle because angels announced Jesus had come to bring us peace and closer to God and each other.

Finally, on Christmas Day the white **CHRIST** candle is lit to commemorate Christ's birth, **LIGHT** and **PURITY**.

Then all five candles are lit throughout the 12 days of Christmas.

If anyone is interested, Laura Richie recently provided the following information:

Advent Wreath and Candles: Understanding the Meaning, History and Tradition
(Just go to: crosswalk.com)

*Margaret Bateman Ellison,
Chancel Guild Co-Director*

Thank you to '**Charles' & Vern's Flower Salon'**
for another lovely Advent Wreath again this year!



St. Paul's Church, Halifax: Sunday and Holy Day Liturgies & Readings
Thanksgiving Sunday 2018–Lent I 2019

				<i>All-Ages Eucharist & Gospel Story</i>
7 October	Thanksgiving Sunday White	10 am	BCP	
Deuteronomy 26:1-13	Psalm 100		Philippians 4:4-9	John 6:25-35
14 October	Pentecost 21 Green	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
Job 23:1-17	Psalm 22		Hebrews 4:12-16	Mark 10:17-31
21 October	Pentecost 22 Green	10 am	BCP Eucharist	
Job 38:1-41	Psalm 104		Hebrews 5:1-6.3	Mark 10:35-45
28 October	Pentecost 23 Green	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
Job 42:1-17	Psalm 34		Hebrews 7:23-28	Mark 10:46-52
4 November	All Saints' Sunday White	10 am	BCP	All-Ages Eucharist Kid's Activity Parish Lunch
Isaiah 25:6-9	Psalm 24		Revelation 21:1-6	John 11:32-44
11 November	Pentecost 25 Green	*9am	BAS Eucharist	*Grand Parade Remembrance Day
Ruth 1:1-18; 3:1-2; 4:13-22	Psalm 127		Hebrews 9:11-28	Mark 12:38-44
18 November	Pentecost 26 Green	10 am	BCP Eucharist	
I Samuel 1:4-20	Psalm 16		Hebrews 10:11-25	Mark 13:1-8
25 November	Reign of Christ White	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
II Samuel 23:1-7	Psalm 132		Revelation 1:4-8	John 18:33-37
3 December	Advent Sunday Purple	10 am	BCP Litany & Eucharist	Parish Lunch
Jeremiah 33:14-16	Psalm 25		I Thessalonians 3:9-13	Luke 21:25-36
9 December	Advent 2 Purple	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
Malachi 3:1-4	Luke 1:68-79		Philippians 1:3-11	Luke 3:1-6
16 December	Advent 3 Purple	10 am	BCP Eucharist	
Zephaniah 3:14-20	Isaiah 12:2-6		Philippians 4:4-7	Luke 3:7-18
23 December	Advent 4 Purple	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
Micah 5:1-4	Luke 1:46b-55		Hebrews 10:5-10	Luke 1:39-55
24 December	Christmas Eve White	4 pm	+BAS Family Nativity Eucharist	7 pm *BCP Choral Eucharist.
*Isaiah 52:7-10	*Psalm 98		*Hebrews 1:1-12	*John 1:1-14
25 December	Christmas Day White	10 am	+BAS Eucharist	
+Isaiah 9:2-7	+Psalm 96		+Titus 2:11-14	+Luke 2:1-20
30 December	Christmas 1 White	10 am	Eucharist	BCP
I Samuel 2:18-20, 26	Psalm 148		Colossians 3:12-17	Luke 2: 41-52
6 January	Epiphany White	10 am	BAS	All-Ages Eucharist Kid's Activity
Isaiah 60:1-6	Psalm 72:1-14		Ephesians 3:1-12	Matthew 2:1-12
13 January	Baptism of the Lord White	10 am	BCP Eucharist	
Isaiah 43:1-7	Psalm 29		Acts 8:14-17	Luke 3:15-22
20 January	Epiphany 2 Green	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
Isaiah 62:1-5	Psalm 36		I Corinthians 12:1-11	John 2:1-11
27 January	Conversion of St. Paul White	10 am	BCP Eucharist	Parish Lunch
Acts 26:9-23	Psalm 67		Galatians 1:11-24	Matthew 10:16-22
3 February	Epiphany 4 White	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
Jeremiah 4:1-10	Psalm 71		I Corinthians 13:1-13	Luke 4:21-30
10 February	Epiphany 5 Green	10 am	BCP Eucharist	
Isaiah 6:1-13	Psalm 138		I Corinthians 15:1-11	Luke 5:1-11
17 February	Epiphany 6 Green	10 am	BAS Eucharist	
Jeremiah 17:5-10	Psalm 1		I Corinthians 15:12-20	Luke 6:17-26
24 February	Epiphany 7 Green	10 am	BCP Eucharist	
Genesis 45:1-15	Psalm 137		I Corinthians 15:38-50	Luke 6:27-38
3 March	Epiphany 8 Green	10 am	BAS Eucharist	AGM & Parish Lunch
Isaiah 55:1-10	Psalm 92		I Corinthians 15:51-58	Luke 6:39-49
6 March	Ash Wednesday Purple	11 am	BCP Eucharist & Ashes	6:30 pm *BAS Eucharist & Ashes
*Joel 2:1-2, 10-17	*Psalm 51:1-18		*II Corinthians 5:20-6:10	*Matthew 6:1-8; 16-21
10 March	Lent I Purple	10 am	BCP Eucharist	
Deuteronomy 26:1-11	Psalm 91		Romans 10:8b-13	Luke 4:1-13



St. Paul's Church
An Historic Church
Serving the Living God since 1749
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Submissions to *St. Paul's Journal* are always welcome.

Why not submit a spiritual reflection, prayer, poem, or a book review?

The next issue of St. Paul's Journal will appear in the Epiphany 2019 Season. *Deadline for submissions: Monday, 7 January 2019.*